

# 6 Anglicans/Episcopalians

## A Message from Martin Luther



Without the Holy Spirit and without grace man can do nothing but sin and so goes on endlessly from sin to sin. But when there is also this added element that he does not uphold sound doctrine, rejects the Word of salvation, and resists the Holy Spirit, then, with the support of his free will, he also becomes an enemy of God, blasphemes the Holy Spirit, and completely follows the evil desires of his heart. (LW 2:40)

### Opening Prayer

L: Exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,”

**P: That none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.**

L: For we share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.

**P: As it is said, “Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”** (Hebrews 3:13–15)

L: Open our eyes, O Lord, that we may behold wondrous things out of Your Word.

**P: Amen!**

### One in Worship

What do the following Bible verses have to say about concerning oneself with a common form of worship, but not concerning oneself with the content of teaching or belief?

**Isaiah 29:13**

**Mark 7:1–8**

**2 Timothy 3:1–5**

What false sense of assurance or certainty can you fall into if the main emphasis is on outward form rather than the content of your faith?

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What can we say about the form of worship? Does form matter at all, or is anything permissible so long as we believe the Christian faith rightly? Compare **Mark 2:27–28** and **2 Timothy 4:3** for guidance in your discussion.

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### One in Faith

In what way does **Matthew 23:27–28** speak a strong warning and condemnation to every Christian?

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When a church body becomes tolerant and accepting of the teachings and practices of the world rather than of the Bible, what impact does this have on the people in the pews? Does this mean that everyone who attends such a church is therefore an unbeliever?

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What things would you be willing to give up, and what things would you insist on keeping, in order to maintain the unity of your church body? What things should be considered non-negotiable?

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## Church Body

# The Anglican Episcopal Church



### History

This church was founded by King Henry VIII in 1534 when he declared the English church to be independent of the pope. All of the church bodies that resulted from this split are called the Anglican Communion. Called the Church of England in Europe, it is called the Episcopal Church in the United States.

### Vital Statistics

The Episcopal Church has about 2.33 million members in the United States. They are headquartered in New York City. The Episcopal Church allows for the ordination of women and, in recent years, openly homosexual individuals. Source: [www.episcopalchurch.org](http://www.episcopalchurch.org).

### Source of Doctrine

The Anglican Communion is directed by Thirty-Nine Articles of Faith formulated in 1563 under Queen Elizabeth I to include differing viewpoints while avoiding extremes. As a result, the Articles are interpreted differently by each of the Anglican bodies. Every ten years, the Anglican Communion meets in the Lambeth Conference

to review these statements.

### Role of Christ/Way of Salvation

While the Episcopal Church teaches that we are justified through the work of Christ, it leaves room for participation on the part of the believer.

### Sacraments

The Episcopal Church practices a trinitarian Baptism for all ages. It teaches that through Baptism the baptized becomes part of the community of faith. The Eucharist shares the real presence of Christ's body and blood as a symbol of the unity of all believers.

### Lutheran Response

Episcopal believers may vary widely in their personal statements of faith. Our opposition to the ordination of homosexuals and women stands against any common ground. Approach the Episcopal believer with a thorough understanding of the Scripture on these issues.